

NEWS RELEASE

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HIGHWAY SAFETY COALITION LAUNCHES SECOND PHASE TO REDUCE ROADWAY FATALITIES

Traffic fatalities down by 30%, but more work to be done toward zero deaths

SACRAMENTO – Today, California launched the next phase in its plan to further reduce fatalities and severe injuries from collisions on public roadways. Brian P. Kelly, Secretary of the California State Transportation Agency, signed California's updated Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) joined by many of the stakeholders from the 170 public agencies and private organizations who collaborated to help create the new transportation safety blueprint.

"The update of the SHSP offers the promise of saving more California lives each year," said Secretary Kelly. "It also includes a greater scope than before, recognizing that our state's transportation system must be safe for users of all forms of transportation – vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and transit."

The SHSP is a national blueprint created for states by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration to develop strategies that save lives and reduce severe injuries. It helps states identify their specific safety challenges, and guides investment decisions toward strategies with the most potential to save lives and prevent severe injuries.

"It is a major achievement for a state as geographically and culturally diverse as California to agree on an approach that meets the needs of such different areas when it comes to traffic safety," said Tony Furst, Associate Administrator for Safety, Federal Highways Administration.

"California's SHSP is a national model for how federal, state, and local governments can work best in partnership with transportation and safety experts and stakeholders," Furst continued. "And due to the level of effort and collaboration between government agencies and advocacy groups, California's updated SHSP promises to be even more robust."

Under the original SHSP, developed in 2005, California experienced a 30.4 percent reduction in roadway fatalities from 2005 to 2012, and a 17.5 percent reduction in severe injuries. The new

plan, just like the original, is largely data-driven, where safety and other significant data is used to help define problems, develop solutions and measure progress.

“One of the key reasons for California’s success in saving lives is that SHSP actions are based on data about collision factors and results are tracked to measure results,” according to David Ragland, PhD, MPH, Emeritus Adjunct Professor, School of Public Health, Director, Safe Transportation Research and Education Center (SafeTREC), University of California, Berkeley.

This SHSP update also comes as a result of requirements under the federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). The Act not only asked all states to update their SHSPs but to expand the scope beyond highways to include all public roads and to put a greater focus on safety for users of all forms of transportation, including bicyclists and pedestrians.

“It is important that we continue to engage more local agencies and other transportation and safety stakeholders, tribal representatives and other nontraditional partners to increase our state’s success,” stated Secretary Kelly. “The other critical partner is the public. With everyone’s engagement, we can not only create safer roadway conditions, we can also change the traffic safety culture in California so that safety is everyone’s first priority.”

California’s lead SHSP agencies are: Caltrans, California Office of Traffic Safety, California Highway Patrol, California Department of Public Health, California Department of Motor Vehicles, California Emergency Medical Services Authority, California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, California State Association of Counties, and County Engineers Association of California.

Anyone interested in helping improve roadway safety is encouraged to get involved by visiting the SHSP website at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/shsp/>. Individuals and organizations can get regular SHSP updates or sign up to participate in one of 15 Challenge Area teams that meet regularly to implement the SHSP and measure its progress. Regional engagement summits will also be held in the coming year. For more information contact SHSP@dot.ca.gov.

The California State Transportation Agency, which launched July 1, 2013, is responsible for transportation-related departments within the state: Board of Pilot Commissioners, California Highway Patrol, California Transportation Commission, Department of Transportation, Department of Motor Vehicles, High-Speed Rail Authority, New Motor Vehicle Board and Office of Traffic Safety. The Agency was formed as part of Governor Brown’s Government Reorganization Plan, which became law in 2012. For more information, visit www.calsta.ca.gov.

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